

Time for Treatment

The Men of Morgan County
Residential Recovery Court, pg. 3



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I am excited that the Governor has allowed me to continue serving during the 2nd term of his administration. I'm proud of all we have accomplished in the first four years and excited to report on some of our Department's key achievements.

You'll see some of these successes highlighted on the pages of this newsletter:

- We've greatly improved the operations of our state hospitals to be even more patient-centered. Our dedicated RMHI staff operates under the philosophy of treating every patient as if treating their own mother.
- Our more than 250 community not-for-profit and faith-based organizations are going the extra mile, helping us serve our most vulnerable citizens.
- And by collaborating with other state agencies, most notably the Departments of Health and Safety, Tennessee's Prescription for Success initiative is dramatically reducing substance abuse in our state.

Many of you have stepped up to help secure discretionary federal grant funds which are helping our veterans, reducing the incidence of suicide, and addressing other critical needs.

I'm especially proud of our Creating Homes Initiative which, since its inception in 2000, has served an estimated 50,000 individuals in recovery with safe and affordable housing.

My hope for us all is that we continue building on our success and remain focused on serving our most vulnerable citizens with compassion and hope.

Sincerely,

E. Douglas Varney, Commissioner



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**TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF
 MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES**

Our VISION

To be one of the nation's most innovative and proactive state behavioral health authorities for Tennesseans dealing with mental health and substance abuse problems.

Our MISSION

Provide, plan for, and promote a comprehensive array of quality prevention, early intervention, treatment, habilitation and recovery support services for Tennesseans with mental illness and substance abuse issues.

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One Super Bowl commercial has gotten a lot of attention this year. It showed footage of a young Katie Couric and Bryant Gumbel on a 1994 broadcast of the “Today Show.” The hosts were debating what the @ sign meant in an email address asking, “What is the internet anyway?” Then the commercial flashes forward to present day as Couric and Gumbel cruise down the street in an electric BMW – this time debating what makes the car go. A fan? A turbine? A turbine fan? Funny. But it was the words on the screen that stuck:

Big ideas take a little getting used to.

Morgan County Residential Recovery Court

Story and photography
by Leslie Judson

Morgan County Residential Recovery Court is a big idea. A big idea with a big name, a big purpose, and a big mission. You may not have heard of Morgan County Residential Recovery Court, or MCRRC, but you’re probably familiar with drug court – also called recovery court – a service for people with substance abuse problems who have broken the law. It’s an opportunity to get clean and stay out of prison. It’s a cost-saving measure for governments, and it saves lives.

Morgan County Residential Recovery Court is like drug court 4.0. It’s a place where non-violent, felony offenders deemed ready and able to successfully complete treatment, can go for a chance at a new, drug-free life. Emphasis on free. After the men complete the program, not only are they free from incarceration but it is also hoped (and proven thus far) they can be free from the bonds of addiction. It’s criminal justice, treatment, and support in one.

MCRRC is the only program of its kind in Tennessee. When it opened in July 2013, it was considered the only such program in the United States. Governor Bill Haslam, a proponent of Tennessee’s drug court system, cut the ribbon. Now, 14 drug courts across the state refer men to Morgan County. Generally, these men have not been successful in a local drug court but need additional treatment. They need more support, more intensive treatments. Once they complete the program (the time frame is different for everyone), the men will transition back to their home court to complete the final phases.

MCRRC is a collaboration between the Tennessee Departments of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and Correction. Both work to build partnerships with recovery courts, public agencies, and community-based organizations across the state to generate support and increase impact.

continued)))



Big ideas take a village . . .

Ellen Abbott, TDMHSAS Director of Criminal Justice Services, has been on the MCRRC team from the beginning. “Everyone came together and just did what needed to be done to get the doors open. [We] believed in the concept and made it happen,” said Abbott.

Located in Wartburg beside Morgan County Correctional Facility, MCRRC still has some razor wire remnants of its past as a prison annex, but it’s been given a new life and a new purpose.

“The program takes men from all across the state and brings them together to live and work in a community. It is their community,” Abbott said. “The whole community is working together to get their lives back on track. They are all different but they come together as one unit. It is amazing how much the guys come together and want each other to get better and move forward in a positive direction in their lives.”



Photo submitted

Above: Maurice (left) and Brian work to beautify the MCRRC campus.



“This is a community. We hold each other accountable.”

This MCRRC crew worked to prepare this dorm building which will serve as a residence for veterans coming into the program. They cleaned the space and built each bed and locker. Pictured front right is crew leader Robby. Crew members, left to right, are Paul, Nick, Matt, Matt, David, and Andy.

continued page 6)))

Daniel

Daniel comes to Tennessee from a small town in Georgia, just outside Macon. He started smoking marijuana at age 11. Daniel says it wasn't long before he began abusing alcohol and pills, ultimately leading to multiple misdemeanors and felonies starting as a teenager. When his father was awarded custody, Daniel moved to Tennessee where he began work. It was at an automotive factory where his drug problem became most apparent and dangerous.

"I had a lot of back-breaking jobs," Daniel said. He would use drugs and alcohol to self-medicate and make the work bearable. "I felt like I was trapped in a mad man's body." Daniel's lifestyle caught up to him. He went to jail at 20 and stayed there for three years. Like many who first get the opportunity to participate in drug court and get clean, Daniel wasn't successful. "I really didn't want to change," he said. "People would plant seeds but they didn't stick. I kept on messing up."

When he had the chance to enter MCRRC, Daniel says he saw the light, and for the first time in a long while, he felt hopeful and ready to do the work to turn his life around. "I really started getting into my step work. I started soul searching. I was on fire for life. I felt like I could do anything. I really believed it, and I still do."

Daniel was among the first men admitted into the MCRRC program. Part of his early days of recovery included working to ready and improve the facility. He and the other men were an integral part of creating a recovery environment – a safe, comfortable place to live and learn how to live in recovery. "We were gonna start something. I was excited. We had a chance to make a difference."

Residents take on everything from constructing beds and lockers to preparing meals and shopping lists to repairing dilapidated buildings and



"I wish I could talk to the person I was years ago."

building new structures. Daniel took an interest in cooking and was drawn to the kitchen where he was responsible for cooking breakfast, lunch, and dinner – in the early days - with a hot plate and microwave. "We made it work," he said. After he graduated from MCRRC, Daniel turned his experience cooking for his fellow residents in recovery to full-time work at a Nashville sandwich shop. In the fall, Daniel plans to enroll in the culinary program at Nashville State.

He is currently living in a halfway house and saving his money to buy a car. In his free time, he attends meetings with his sponsor of two years, and has returned to weight lifting - one of his childhood passions. "My mission for life is to be happy. I feed my soul daily. Instead of feeding into the negative, there are a million more things to be positive about. Most of the world is not in recovery. You're either going to go down a good road or a bad road. If you're doing good, good things are going to come."

Men at MCRRC are not idle. While the program allows time for personal learning and reflection, there is a daily schedule, and the men are expected to participate in activities which include maintaining a clean, safe, and recovery-oriented environment. Set up on a crew system and led by their peers, crews focus on: leadership, safety, community service, education, building maintenance, dorm monitors, gardening & landscaping, and food service. A typical day at MCRRC includes small group time, lectures, community and crew meetings, and meals in the dining area.

Days begin at 6 a.m. with meditation and journaling, morning chores, and breakfast. Medications are dispensed to some of the men who are being treated for physical and mental illness. People addicted to drugs often do not take care of themselves, and once in treatment can face a variety of conditions and ailments. Folks at MCRRC monitor the men and transport them to doctor appointments when needed. Phone time is considered a privilege and comes at the end of the day. Curfew is at 9 p.m. Lights go out at 10:30.

The men are expected to “pay it forward.” One way to do that is to help others. At MCRRC, that means working on-site to improve the facility. On site projects have included: building a greenhouse, beds and lockers for the dorm rooms, and property signs, as well as doing electrical work, remodeling bathrooms, landscaping, and more.

Service work reaches into the community. At the local Deer Lodge Community Center, a crew of eight worked for several weeks to replace the rotting floor in the gym. They replaced the roof at Wartburg Rescue Mission and built storage sheds for Habitat for Humanity. They also replaced a roof and did repair work on an elderly man’s home, and recently several did much-needed renovation work for an area church. Smaller projects have included clearing an old family cemetery and raking leaves.



Jason (left) and Will prepare lunch.

“This place saved my life. It has been a blessing for me and my family. They’re seeing a new me.”



Richie, a father to two sons and a daughter, is 18 months clean. He enjoys working on small engines in the MCRRC mechanics shop and teaching others what he knows.

Residents have come from 22 counties and 14 judicial districts, from all walks of life and backgrounds and include young men, older men, veterans, professionals, husbands, fathers, grandfathers. 27 have successfully completed the long-term program; many others are in various stages of the program.

“The MCRRC program has only been in operation for about 18 months but the outcomes are very promising,” said Judge Seth Norman, Criminal Court Division 4 Judge, who presides over court at MCRRC and was instrumental in establishing both MCRRC and DC4, Nashville’s first drug court. “If you do not treat an addict who has been convicted of a crime, statistics show that over 50% of them will be back in the judicial system within three years of release. Of those who receive long term treatment while serving their sentence, only about 25% of them return. While it is early in the MCRRC program, their current recidivism rate is less than 20%.”

Britt

“I feel like drug addiction has robbed me of so much.” At 48 years old, Britt is determined to have another shot at life. As a young man, he wanted to be a doctor. In 1992, when the state had a shortage of dentists, Britt had the opportunity to join a pilot program dental school. He jumped at the chance. “There wasn’t a semester I didn’t make the Dean’s list,” he said.

Britt says he turned to pot to help him deal with the stress of school. He was arrested for possession, and his life took a nose dive. When the would be dentist had to get some dental work done himself, Britt says he was prescribed drugs for the pain and soon built up a tolerance. “They boost your energy level.”

“You feel indestructible. But then you aren’t.”

At some point, when the opportunity presented itself, Britt turned to morphine to ease the pain. He says at one point he was using up to 3,000 mg/ day. A habit that left him fatigued and sick much of the time. “The physical sickness is what keeps you stuck.”

Britt found himself in a vicious cycle.

Britt didn’t grow up with much direction from family, but in his 20s he received an inheritance. “It was more of a curse than a blessing,” he said and used the money to fund his habit. “I sold a farm that had been in my family for over 100 years.” Everyone in his small town knew about his troubles. “I went from being someone who was liked and respected to being a drug addict.” Britt says he applied to drug court three times and was denied. “My addiction accelerated.” It was his lawyer, he said, who convinced the court to give Britt a chance in drug court.

Britt has been at Morgan County for eight months. “I feel hopeful today. That’s what drug addiction takes from you. You don’t have any desire to live anymore. You don’t take care of yourself. When you come in, you’re just existing. You’re not living. You’re numb. It’s like you’re in a haze.”



Britt constructed this wooden holder and filled it with informational brochures. It hangs in one of the entrances at Morgan County Residential Recovery Court.

Britt tries to mentor new men who walk through those doors. He remembers how he felt during his first days. “I was a mess. I had given up on myself. I was beat up in a lot of ways – physically, mentally, and spiritually.” Britt credits his counselor for helping him turn a corner. “I didn’t know how to deal with my emotions. Sometimes I didn’t know what I was feeling. But I knew I wanted to live differently. Now, I feel better physically. I have goals.”

Britt hopes to grow closer to his children who are 9, 12, and 16 years old. He also thinks about going back to school. He’s always been interested in science and contemplates how he can utilize his experiences with addiction and recovery in his future studies. He would like to make a difference.

“Getting clean is like being revitalized. The longer you get clean, the further you can see.”



Matt

At 30 years old, Matt (left) says he has been through four or five treatment programs. Morgan County was the one that actually worked. "This has been a life-changing experience. It's been a relief," he said. Matt doesn't know when he will be ready to leave MCRRC but dreams of a day when he will be reunited with his son Levi, 3.



Danny

Danny, 43, from Mt. Juliet, once owned a successful vinyl siding business even though he grew up in an alcoholic family and left home at 15. His addiction almost killed him more than once.

"I have flatlined three times. I'm tired of fighting. I have surrendered." Danny has been at MCRRC about 8 months. "I was broken. I was very angry. This place has showed me how to deal with all of my anger," he said. "I can learn from everyone who comes in here."



Graduates Richie & Ben

Richie (left) and Ben stand on the concrete path that winds throughout the property, from the dormitories to the dining hall to the workshop to the courtroom. In December, this path led them out of the gate and to their new lives in recovery.



Judge Seth W. Norman is currently the Judge of Division IV Criminal Court, but his work and its impact are felt statewide. Elected to the bench in 1990, Judge Norman has been reelected without opposition three times. In addition to Division IV Criminal Court, he also presides over the 13th Judicial District Drug Court, Davidson County Drug Court (also known as DC4, which he founded in 1996), and MCRRC which he helped to establish in 2013. Judge Norman is a recovery court believer. “There is no doubt in my mind of the fact that Tennessee needs more treatment beds and a curtailment in the building of more prison beds,” he said. “There is a great need for treatment beds for women. At the present time, there are a total of 160 treatment beds for men, but only 30 for women.”

Treatment over hard time makes sense fiscally, Judge Norman said. “I hate to see my tax money spent foolishly. If people who are not familiar with addiction . . . do not care about addicts, they should care how their tax money is spent,” he said. The average cost of housing and treating an individual either in Nashville or MCRRC is about \$50/day vs. \$75 per day/individual in jail. “Almost all of the individuals who are placed in one of the treatment facilities would be incarcerated for at least three years if they went to prison; they normally finish the residential portion of their treatment in about 18 months. Ten years of statistics show that the State of Tennessee saves about \$33,000 for every person who completes one of the treatment programs.”



“I don’t want you to just talk the talk. I want you to walk the walk.” Judge Seth Norman

Stacy

Stacy (right) is on the kitchen crew, a job he takes very seriously. In this photo, he and Brandon are preparing to honor the retirement of Sue Young, a beloved staff member. Stacy said he's inspired by the staff who are also in recovery and teach by example. "If they can do it, I can do it!" he said. "I want to give myself the best chance I can when I get out of here."

Stacy, 37, had a problem with opiates. He's been in prison, and he has no intention of going back. "There's not much humanity in prison. I was alone. I was feeling disconnected. This place has allowed me to find a hope that I can count on, to help me to find out who I really am." Stacy is prepared to keep working toward a life of recovery. "How can I come here and think that it's not gonna take a lot of hard work. If it is so easy, why isn't everyone doing it?"

"I just want the second part of my life to be better than the first."



"I am learning a new way of life."

Residents gather often for community meetings. Leading this one is Program Director Brad MacLean who is sitting in the witness stand of the judge's bench. MacLean has spent much of his life in a courtroom. He practiced law for 25 years at a Nashville law firm. In 2007, he retired from the firm to devote his time to capital cases and to represent death row inmates. He served for 20 years as an adjunct professor of law at

Vanderbilt Law School. MacLean walked away from the active practice of law when Judge Norman gave him the opportunity to serve as director at MCRRC. "I chose to work at MCRRC because I believe that our criminal justice system needs to develop different ways of addressing the underlying causes of crime," he said. "The drug court movement represents a change in approach which I believe is badly needed."

The success rate has caused other states to take notice, looking to MCRRC as a model for their own residential recovery courts. Some of the achievement is dependent on support after the men leave the facility.

“When they leave here, they lose some of the support. We take that transition very seriously,” said Program Director Brad MacLean. “Developing a support system is one of the most important things we can do and the most difficult thing the men can do.”

One of the requirements of graduation is that the men find a sponsor who walks alongside them in recovery. Many travel several miles to AA/NA meetings daily from MCRRC, filling a van with eager 12-steppers, each on his own path. MacLean says he hopes to get an AA meeting started in Wartburg to serve residents and the community.

Yes, big ideas take a little getting used to.

But it only takes a peek inside MCRRC to see the good that is happening here. The recovery. The healing. The growth. MacLean and his staff and the men at MCRRC have dug in. This big idea is no longer an idea. The seed has been planted. And just like the gardens (right) that the men plant and tend each spring, fruit and flowers now bloom. New life sprouts from the dust. A new season has begun. The vision grows.

Ellen Abbott has been on team MCRRC from day one, from the ground up. She hopes the state builds on this community recovery model and expands to include a program for women. “MCRRC saves lives and families and gives men who complete the program an opportunity to return to their community and get their lives back on a positive productive track.”



Brothers in recovery: Terry, Michael, JJ., Andy, Drew, Matt, and Richard following a morning of service work in the community.

Photo submitted

Always striving for perfection . . .

Hospitals Earn Gold Seal of Approval

Western and Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institutes continue to earn high marks in excellence. Both were named a “Top Performer on Key Quality Measures” by The Joint Commission, the leading accrediting body for health care organizations in the United States.

“Our priority is putting our patients first, by ensuring they receive the highest quality care and treatment to help them manage their individual behavior health challenges,” said Commissioner Varney. “I’m especially grateful for the commitment our professionals make every day to the health, wellbeing, and recovery of the patients in our care.”



Middle and Western were first recognized as Top Performers in 2012 and again in 2013. The staffs continue to demonstrate their ability to maintain high standards in patient care.

“It’s with great pride that I extend congratulations and thanks to our dedicated professionals for their commitment to excellence,” said Commissioner Varney. “It’s reassuring to know that our patients and their loved ones can count on us to provide the very best in personalized behavioral health diagnosis and treatment.”



Western Mental Health Institute

Hospital Services in Tennessee

In 2014, at our four Regional Mental Health Institutes:

9,218	Admissions / 52.7% were first admissions
477.18	Average daily census
5.9 days	Average length of stay (acute)
80%	of patients reported they were satisfied with services

Top Performers



Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute

The leadership team at MTMHI: front row: Valentin Nanev, Lisa Brown, Lance Morgan, M. S. Jahan, Joyce Kovacs, Lesa Hall, Sharon Hamby, Margie Dunn, Kalyn McCoy, Jamma Law, Cheryl Bohan, Lori Abriola, Sherri Gentry, Patricia Harris, Barbara Nightingale, and CEO Bob Micinski. Back row: Greg Bolden, Nancy Kirby, Mark Stanley, Kathy Sanchez, Marsha Coopriider, Steve Blair, Mac Schrimsher, Ted Salyers, LaWanda Jenkins, and Sharon Mays.



Western Mental Health Institute

The leadership team at WMHI: front row (sitting): Donny Hornsby, Clara Manley, Rita Kennedy. Front row (standing): Tammy Gammel, Renee Anderson, Debbie Spencer, Ruby Harvey, Lisa Roy, Demetrick Wellington, Pat Sewell, Dorothy Prather, Amy Weaver, and Kelly Martin. Second row (standing): John "Jeff" Coons, Mike Murley, Kevin Turner, M.D., Jeffrey Robbins, M.D., Luzone Dickerson, DeBora Murphy, M.D., Shirlene Talarico, Barrett Stevens, Cindy Droke, CEO Roger Pursley, Elaine Kirk, Dell Ann Cossar, Ronald Bruce, James Varner, M.D. Stairs, by the bannister: Sandy Malone, Marvin Shaw, and Carrie McGowan. Stairs, middle row: Earl Bates and Melvin Ewell. Stairs, by the wall: Eddie Kessler, Harley Smoot, III, M.D., and Jessica Russell.

Advancing Patient Care

From recordkeeping to medication distribution, the Division of Hospital Services is seeking to enhance the ability of its mental health professionals to better monitor and manage the care provided to patients.

“The days of hand written notes on charts and prescription note pads are numbered,” said John Arredondo, Assistant Commissioner of Hospital Services. “Going electronic with our recordkeeping and automating the dispensing of medications will significantly reduce errors and improve patient outcomes.”

Last fall, a team of students from Vanderbilt University embarked on a project to assess the implementation of an automated medication dispensing system. Eliza Stedman, Sara Bowman, and Sami Kopinsky’s evaluation offered an independent analysis, and findings that suggest many benefits – such as ensuring patients get the correct medication and savings of time and money for Tennessee’s regional mental health institutes.

“We were very impressed by the students’ evaluation,” said Arredondo. “It confirmed many of our own findings that an automated approach will benefit our patients as well as the clinical staff.”



Eliza Stedman, Sara Bowman, and Sami Kopinsky

Following a thorough assessment phase, Hospital Services anticipates implementing the automated system throughout Tennessee’s mental health institutes.

UT Students, MMHI Score a Win-Win

Medical students and residents from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) in Memphis are resuming their clinical rotations at Memphis Mental Health Institute (MMHI). The renewed partnership with UTHSC will include clinical rotations for nurse practitioner students from UT’s Advanced Practice & Doctoral Studies program within the College of Nursing, with the focus on individual, group, and family therapy. “These students will be actively involved in our Treatment Mall where they will be exposed to group counseling skills from more than 100 different

psycho-educational groups,” said Lisa A. Daniel, CEO, MMHI. “Additionally, they will be exposed to new insights, skills, and techniques from Dr. Vijaya Chandel, M.D., who recently joined the staff and is trained and experienced in family therapy.”



Lifeline Project Coordinators 2015

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services hosted the Semi-Annual meeting for the Lifeline Peer Project coordinators on January 26. The Lifeline Peer Project is a statewide initiative that was established to reduce stigma related to the disease of addiction and to increase community support for policies that provide for treatment and recovery services.



Representing the state are front row, left to right: Drew Lester (Region 6 North), Dave Hodges (Region 3 South), Ashley Davis (Region 6 South), Lynda Loftis (Region 3 North), Danny Spano (Region 5 North), Jason Abernathy (Region 1), and Kirk Johnson (Region 4). Second row, left to right: Jack Wyatt (Region 7), Allen Burnette (Region 5 South), and Stan Grubb (Region 2).

Staff Give Back

Department staff from the Hospital Services Division, Information Technology, and the Office of Communications participated in the 4th annual College Prep Day held October 4 at Watson Grove MB Church in Nashville. The seminar, "Everything You Need to Know to Prepare for College," included Speed Networking in which students in grades 8-12 were given the opportunity to meet with professionals and ask questions about their chosen field of studies. Participating from Central Office were (front row) Laura Young, DNP, Rachel Bauer, PharmD, and Jason Carter, PharmD, and (back row) Leslie Judson, Gwen Hamer, who also served as an event coordinator, and Richard Zhu.



Introducing the TDMHSAS Crisis Services

OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEE | By Leslie Judson

Drum roll, please. Our first Crisis Services Outstanding Employee is Rick Duncan, Crisis Clinician, Ridgeview Psychiatric Hospital and Center, Inc. in Oak Ridge.

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services is proud to announce a new initiative inspired by the wonderful work of our state's crisis teams. Beginning in this edition of *Update*, we will recognize outstanding employees in the field of Crisis Services.

Why are we doing this?

"We appreciate the dedication, commitment, and compassion demonstrated by professionals who are working in the crisis services system," said Melissa Sparks, Director of Crisis and Suicide Prevention Services. "For individuals experiencing a particularly difficult time, the interaction one has with the professional responding to them in crisis can make all the difference in the world. If the interaction goes well, it can aid the road to recovery for that individual but if it does not go well, the person in crisis may never be incentivized to seek mental health services again. Crisis services staff must be willing to work all hours of the day and night, travel through all types of weather, and have a mountain of patience as they attempt to negotiate care with insurance carriers and/or family members."

The Nomination

Anyone working in Crisis Services in the state of Tennessee can nominate someone for this honor. Rick was nominated as an Outstanding Employee by his colleague, David Morgan.

"Rick is a diligent worker with a positive attitude and always maintains a sense of humor even in difficult situations," Morgan said. "He works the weekend overnight shift which tends to be the busiest shift. Rick has actually seen up to eight face-to-face evaluations in a single shift which is a record for Ridgeview Mobile Crisis."

Mobile Crisis Team Coordinator Julie Upham said she is proud of the quality work accomplished by the 13-member staff. "We are a small, close-knit group," Upham said. "Rick has worked a really tough, busy weekend night shift schedule for years and years. It is a relief to know there is a steady, dependable, and seasoned clinician working those shifts. When he takes a vacation, the covering clinician can bank on hearing, 'Where's



Photo submitted

Rick Duncan, Outstanding Employee

Rick?' from ERs, jail staff, and other referring agencies. Rick lets very little stop him. He is valued by his co-workers throughout Ridgeview for his experience and his work ethic."

"Unless you've walked in the shoes of someone in crisis, it's impossible to know exactly what they're feeling, but you can show empathy and listen."

Rick Duncan

Meet our Crisis Services Outstanding Employee

Rick, 56, is happy to be providing services in Oak Ridge where he grew up. He works 40 hours a week, manning the overnight shifts on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. He also has a second job as a case manager with the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

About his role at Ridgeview, Rick says: "I assess adults who are experiencing a crisis in their lives. These assessments are completed in area hospitals and jails. My goal is to find suitable services

for these individuals which can range from follow-up with a current provider, hospitalization, or assistance with entering the mental health system for the first time."

Rick spends a lot of time at work helping others but he also makes himself a priority, too. "If we don't take care of ourselves, we are at risk for burnout, which would affect how we approach our clients. First and foremost is that I try never to take my work home with me. I also spend a lot of time with my

three kids and granddaughter and relaxing with my girlfriend.”

Rick got a new perspective on life and self-care following a serious health scare in 2013. “I was diagnosed with a grapefruit-sized, non-malignant tumor. I was actually at Methodist Medical Center in Oak Ridge assessing a client when I passed out.

I had no symptoms whatsoever. I gave myself three months to live when I was first informed. Luckily, I was given a second chance when they diagnosed it as a Meningioma. Ten days after my diagnosis, I was at Vanderbilt Hospital undergoing brain surgery for six hours.” Rick was back at work 2 months after surgery.

“My experience showed me how quickly life could end. It changed me in ways that only I and others that have been there can understand. I no longer take life for granted and appreciate the little things in life that had become mundane. It changed my personality to a large extent. The little things don’t really seem to bother me anymore.”



Rick Duncan hard at work



Crisis Services in Tennessee From 2011-2013:

116,891	Crisis Calls (adults)
11,388	Crisis Calls (youth)
54,333	Face-to-face Assessments (adults)
7,046	Face-to-face Assessments (youth)
9,469	Admissions to Crisis Stabilization Units

Each year, 40,000+ Tennesseans are provided suicide prevention education

Tennessee Statewide Toll-Free Crisis Line: 1-855-CRISIS-1

*Confidential help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

High Praise from NAMI

My Health, My Choice, My Life: 2014 Model Project Award

The National Alliance on Mental Illness, NAMI Tennessee, offered special recognition to a department initiative at the state conference in September 2014.

NAMI honored My Health, My Choice, My Life with its 2014 Model Project Award. The program is unique in that it focuses on improving mental health and wellness by encouraging and teaching participants to make healthier choices that result in improved wellbeing and outlook on life.

“The clients as well as their family members have really benefited from this approach,” said Katie Lee, Program Manager, Consumer Wellness and Employment Programs. “We are deeply grateful for NAMI Tennessee’s award and for the opportunity to be a part of a project that is helping our fellow Tennesseans live healthy and more productive lives.”



Fun from last year's My Health, My Choice, My Life Championship Games.



Pictured left to right: Mark Bresee (AIM Center, Inc. Peer Wellness Coach), Tiffany Claiborne (Pathways Peer Wellness Coach), Lindsey Johnson (Pathways Peer Wellness Coach), Richard Baxtor (Past President of NAMI TN Board of Directors), Sue Karber (TDMHSAS Director of Consumer Wellness and Employment Programs), Katie Lee (TDMHSAS Program Manager), and Donald Williams (Centerstone Peer Wellness Coach).



Marie Williams: NAMI Professional Award

For making a significant impact on mental health care and for serving as a model of hope and tenacity, Deputy Commissioner Marie Williams received the 2014 NAMI Tennessee Professional Award. Executive Director Jeff Fladen, NAMI Tennessee, presented the award which recognizes Deputy Commissioner Williams for her “tireless effort and selfless commitment to the mental wellbeing of the people of Tennessee.”

Prescription for Success, The Sequel

Back by demand, the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services rebooted last summer's statewide Prescription for Success tour for an audience in Rutherford County.

Billed as the Prescription Drug Abuse Summit, legislators as well as select individuals from law enforcement, the courts, anti-drug coalitions, providers, and people in recovery assembled for the meeting and discussion about how to tackle the prescription drug abuse epidemic facing Tennessee's citizens and leaders.

Commissioner Varney led the gathering held at Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital in Murfreesboro which attracted news media from the local Gannett-owned *Daily News Journal* and Nashville's Fox 17 News.



Attendees to the Murfreesboro Prescription Drug Abuse Summit included Sen. Jim Tracy, (R) Shelbyville, Sen. Bill Ketron, (R) Murfreesboro, TDMHSAS Commissioner E. Douglas Varney, Rep. G.A. Hardaway, (D) Memphis, and Rep. Mike Sparks, (R) Smyrna.

It's All About the Planning . . .

From the Great Smoky Mountains to the Mighty Mississippi and all places in between, there's a group of Tennessee citizens who are dedicated to ensuring and advancing mental health and substance abuse services for all who need them. They make up the department's planning councils.

In 2014, the seven Regional Councils as well as the Statewide Council engaged hundreds of people with an interest in services. The councils, which include providers, consumers, family members of consumers, and stakeholders, let their voices be heard on what services are most needed.



"The councils play a unique and powerful role in determining the goals of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services," said Dr. Paul Fuchcar, Chair of the Statewide Council and Executive Director of CADAS. "Information emerges from every member of each of the Regional Councils, which becomes essential in the planning of statewide initiatives."

Members of the Statewide Council convened at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute in December.

Stars Turn Out for the TAMHO Awards

More than 200 gathered at the Murfreesboro Embassy Suites Hotel in December for the Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations, TAMHO, annual conference and awards program. Commissioner Varney and Deputy Commissioner Williams, along with other department staff, joined in to recognize those serving the needs of Tennesseans.

The 2014 conference, Time for Change, placed emphasis on suicide prevention. Speakers and participants spoke to the need for more resources and services, with the continued message and state goal of ZERO suicides.

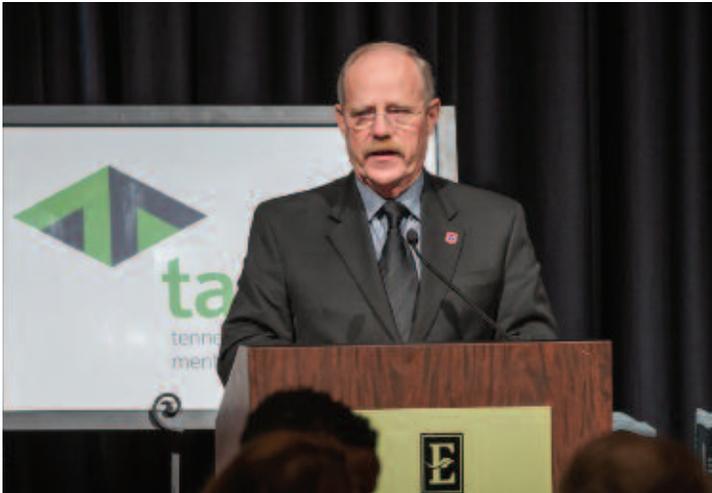
Among the special recognitions were the Distinguished Service Award presented to Charles Good, former CEO Frontier Health, and the Frank G. Clement Community Service Award bestowed on the Honorable Douglas Henry, Jr., former Tennessee Senator, who was lauded as a longtime, unsung hero of the behavioral health community during his many years of service in the legislature.



Douglas Henry Jr. and Commissioner Varney



Below: Sejal West, Assistant Commissioner of Mental Health Services, speaking on a panel about suicide prevention in the state of Tennessee.



Tony Young

Commissioner Varney addresses the conference.

Commissioner Varney presented seven community behavioral healthcare providers with a special certificate signed by Governor Bill Haslam stating that each had earned the distinction of being a Tennessee “Same Day Access Facility.” These providers were deemed to have “transformed the customer experience by streamlining their access-to-care processes. Staff reduced waiting time for appointments, increased client engagement, and improved overall access to care. These changes have made a significant impact on the lives of those who seek behavioral health services in Tennessee.”



Tony Young

Congratulations Carey Counseling Center, Centerstone of Tennessee, Professional Care Services of West TN, Volunteer Behavioral Health, Alliance Health Services, Ridgeview, and Quinco Mental Health Center.

Community Services in Tennessee

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services manages approximately 750 contracts with more than 250 private, non-profit, and/or faith-based agencies. In 2014, nearly 400,000 adults and children were served.

Mental Health	Substance Abuse Services
281,330 Adults served (18-24)	41,875 Adults served (25 +)
57,425 Youth served (0-17)	17,347 Youth served (0-24)

*From 2010-2014, 3.5 million received information about mental health and substance abuse

Mike Machak

Tony Young

October Chili Cook-Off

With a chill in the air and appetites engaged, the heat was on in the Andrew Jackson Hearing Room last October as the department's Top Chefs put their best chili recipes to the test. An esteemed and experienced panel of chili judges was assembled, which included Deputy Commissioner Marie Williams, Assistant Commissioner Sejal West, Katie Ledbetter, and the recently-retired Rodney Sanders.

Several chilies were entered in the cook-off, a testament to the fierce competitive spirit in TDMHSAS. Others were just there for the party and joined the "Chili Wanna Have Fun" category. In the end, there would be just one chili worthy of the Golden Bean award.

Congratulations to top chili chef Debra Cunningham and all of the competitors. "It's always a good day when you win," said Cunningham.

Photos by Andre Gibson and Mike Machak.



Chili good enough to stand in line for, said Linda McCorkle and Alexis Lacy.





Mesina Bullock, Middle TN Regional Wellness Coordinator (left) and Kathryn Hall, representatives from Working for a Healthier TN, were greeted by Deputy Commissioner Marie Williams.



Chili and corn chips brought out the silly in Kurt Hippel and Kevin Dillehay.



Danette Wilson (left) and Edwina Chappell (right) pose with Melissa McGee, former Wellness Council chair, who led the Chili Cook-Off effort.



continued)))



The Wellness Council served up a side of fitness. Monty Burks, Mike Machak, and Sarah Sanders performed fitness demonstrations throughout the event.



Judge Sejal West



Happy staffers: Richard Potts and Micheal Jones.



Winning Recipe

Deb's White Chicken Chili

2 tablespoons olive oil
 2 onions, chopped
 4 cloves garlic, minced
 4 cooked, boneless chicken breast half, chopped
 3 (14.5 oz.) cans chicken broth
 2 (4 oz.) cans canned green chile peppers, chopped
 2 teaspoons ground cumin
 2 teaspoons dried oregano
 1 1/2 teaspoons cayenne pepper
 5 (14.5 oz.) cans great Northern beans, undrained
 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese

Heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onions and garlic and saute for 10 minutes, or until onions are tender. Add the chicken, chicken broth, chili peppers, cumin, oregano, and cayenne pepper and bring to a boil.

Reduce heat to low and add the beans. Simmer for 20 to 30 minutes or until heated thoroughly. Pour into bowls and top with the cheese.

Deb's recipe tips: "I typically use more cans of beans and green chiles than what are called for. I steam my chicken breasts. I add the onions to the soup instead of sautéing with the garlic. I also add 3 Tablespoons of flour (optional) and mix with a half cup of the chicken broth to thicken."



Deputy Commissioner Williams presents Deb Cunningham with the Golden Bean Award for best chili.





Cutting the ribbon on December 15 is Randy Boyd, Radio Systems Corporation, now serving as Commissioner of Economic and Community Development for the State of Tennessee. He stands alongside CEO/President Jerry Vagnier, Helen Ross McNabb Center.

New Veterans' Housing Opens in Knoxville

The Helen Ross McNabb Foundation held a ribbon cutting ceremony for eight new units constructed on Coster Road in Knoxville.

The new units are called Cedar Crossing and are part of a project started by Helen Ross, who has raised \$1.83 million to develop and sustain housing facilities that serve homeless veterans with mental illnesses and/or behavioral health disabilities. In addition to the construction of Cedar Crossing, 15 units on Washington Pike have been renovated to serve the veteran population.

National studies indicate that one in every five people who are homeless also served in the military. Veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are going from serving their country to life on the streets much faster than the generation of veterans who served in Vietnam.

The Helen Ross McNabb Center understands that veterans who are either homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless need access to integrated services to ensure the best possible outcomes for recovery and resilience. Supportive housing can be the first step in

addressing complex factors like mental illness, addiction, and job loss that compound a homeless veteran's ability to be healthy and successful.

In order to qualify for housing, prospective residents are homeless on intake and are likely to have little to no income. The Helen Ross McNabb Center collaborates with the Veterans Administration through the use of Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (V.A.S.H.) vouchers for placement at both locations.

Family Visitation Program Moves to Helen Ross McNabb

Parent Place, a supervised visitation program, has a new home at the Helen Ross McNabb Center.

Prior Parent Place served 135 families a year through Catholic Charities of East Tennessee. Partnering with the Helen Ross McNabb Center allows Parent Place to expand and serve more and also provide supportive services like parent education, family therapy, and case management.

About the change, Catholic Charities Executive Director Sister Mary Christine Cremin said, "We won't let any program go unless it is going to the right place and we feel that the Helen Ross McNabb Center is the right place."

Helen Ross McNabb Center President and CEO Jerry Vagnier said, "The goal of Parent Place fits nicely into [our] mission



and will increase our ability to provide wraparound services to children and families in our community."

Parent Place's new location is 2455 Sutherland Ave. on the Helen Ross McNabb Center's John Tarleton Campus in Knoxville.

TAADAS Recognizes Excellence



Award recipients, from left to right, were: Rep. David Hawk, Laura Berlind, Kathleen Thomas accepting on behalf of her father Sen. Doug Overbey, Daryl Murray, and Boomer Brown.

TAADAS celebrated National Recovery Month with a concert and banquet held in Nashville last September.

Rep. Hawk of Greeneville and Sen. Overbey of Maryville won the Voice of Recovery Award for a 2014 budget amendment which called for additional funding for alcohol and drug addiction treatment to those who are indigent. Both serve regions of Tennessee affected by increases in substance abuse.

Laura Berlind, CEO of Renewal House, received the Volunteer of the Year award. Berlind has served as an officer on the Executive Committee of TAADAS for the past four years and will become President this July.

Daryl Murray, CEO of Welcome Home Ministries, received the CEO of the Year award. Murray founded Welcome Home Ministries 22 years ago and has served as CEO since. Murray serves as Chair of the TAADAS Recovery Support and Criminal Justice Committee. He has helped launch an association of recovery residences with the inception of the Tennessee Association of Recovery Residences.

Boomer Brown received the Lifetime Achievement award in recognition of 25 years as a counselor, mentor, and advocate. Brown has served as President of TAADAS and held various Chair positions. He advocates for meeting patients' recovery needs and professionalization of the field at local and statewide committee hearings. TAADAS said it is because of his personal relationships with those in recovery that define his legacy of lifetime achievement.

TN Providers Chosen for National Substance Abuse Initiative

The National Council for Behavioral Health has selected 29 community behavioral health organizations from across six states to participate in an initiative to reduce adolescent substance abuse. Four of the 29 providers selected are from Tennessee: Alliance Healthcare Services, Carey Counseling Center, Inc., Frontier Health, and Helen Ross McNabb Center.

The Reducing Adolescent Substance Abuse Initiative is a two-and-a-half year project that benefits adolescents ages 15-22 who receive services for emotional disturbance or

psychiatric disorders. The project is designed to help providers implement a protocol that includes screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment for adolescent substance abuse.

The project also addresses how Medicaid can pay for these services. The other providers selected to participate in this initiative are from California, Colorado, Kansas, New York, and Rhode Island. Learn more about the project and providers at www.TheNationalCouncil.org.

Suicide Prevention Awareness Day

Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) held its annual Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event at Trevecca Community Church in Nashville on September 10, 2014. Commissioner E. Douglas Varney presented a proclamation on behalf of Governor Bill Haslam naming September as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. TSPN has received a proclamation from the Office of the Governor each year since 2001. Scott Couch, anchor/reporter with Nashville's FOX 17 News, emceed the event.



Commissioner Varney presents the proclamation to Jennifer Harris, TSPN Advisory Council Chair, and TSPN Executive Director Scott Ridgway.

Knoxville Community Day

Despite the rainy weather, people of all ages turned out for the Community Awareness Celebration on Knoxville's Market Square on the afternoon of Friday, October 10. The free event, scheduled during Mental Illness Awareness Week, is an opportunity to raise awareness of mental illness, to reduce stigma, and to celebrate diversity. It featured food, door prizes, a pie eating contest, dancing, and a performance by country singer Laurel Wright. Local radio personalities Krishna and Opie Joe from Q100.3 FM emceed. The Community Awareness Celebration is presented by Helen Ross McNabb Center and Behavioral Health Awareness Coalition of East Tennessee.



PROVIDERS: SHARE YOUR NEWS AND AWARDS



Want to be featured in an upcoming issue of this newsletter? Next deadline: April 6. Send your information and/or photos (in jpeg format) with caption information to Leslie Judson at Leslie.Judson@tn.gov.

Frontier Health’s CEO Charles E. Good Retired

Good played an integral role in the development of mental health services in Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia. “Charlie saw advantages in local mental health and community organizations cooperating to meet regional needs,” said Gary Mabrey, Chair of Frontier Health Board of Directors. Good “was one of the leaders who made sure services continued despite turbulent health care change.”

Good received the Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations Distinguished Service Award in December. He was recognized for his work beginning in 1972, at the Johnson City Education Youth Center working with severely emotionally disturbed adolescents, to his role as CEO of Frontier Health, the not-for-profit 501(c)(3) he helped unite.



“Charlie dedicated 42 years serving some of our most vulnerable citizens, creating new programs, launching initiatives, refining existing ones and under his leadership helped lay the foundation for a behavioral health care system that truly provides a continuum of care for individuals in Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia,” said Frontier Health President and CEO Teresa Kidd. “His honest and direct approach in delivering behavioral health services led to a system that strives to leave no one behind.”

Good held vital leadership roles to ensure delivery of quality services and financial viability of what would become Frontier Health and was directly involved in the development of TRACES Therapeutic Foster Care; Sullivan House adolescent residential; SAFE House domestic violence shelter; Link House runaway program; residential treatment and group homes for those mentally ill or with intellectual disabilities; and Kingsport Center of Opportunity for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

As CEO, Charlie led two successful CARF accreditations and continues involvement in community initiatives. He served on the TAMHO Executive and Quality committees, and was 2013 TAMHO Board of Directors President. He is on Southwest Virginia’s ONE Care and the Southwest Virginia Health Authority’s Boards of Directors. He was affiliated with Tennessee Psychological Association, Midwestern Association of Behavioral Analysis, and the American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy.

Good has volunteered with the Boy Scouts for many years. He is President of Sequoyah Council BSA for 16 counties in Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia.

Hawkins County Mental Health Begins Intensive Outpatient

Hawkins Co. Mental Health Center, a division of Frontier Health, launched an intensive outpatient program in August 2014 for individuals with substance use disorders and co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders.

Individuals in the program receive the same level of intensive alcohol and drug treatment available in larger communities.

They may self-refer to the program or may be referred by family members, a physician, a professional peer association, the emergency room, jail, or a parole officer.

Frontier Health also offers intensive outpatient services at Johnson City’s Watauga Behavioral Health, Kingsport’s Holston Counseling, and Bristol Regional Counseling Center.

Day on the Hill



What is Day on Capitol Hill?

The 14th annual Behavioral Health Day on Capitol Hill, sometimes called “Day on the Hill,” is an event focusing on education, advocacy training, and visits with legislators. The event is free; however, registration is required. Lunch is provided with registration.

What is the schedule of events?

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 18. The program begins at 9:30.

Speakers include Paul Gionfriddo, CEO of Mental Health America and author of “Losing Tim.” As a legislator in Connecticut, he says he helped to create a healthcare system that failed his son, Tim, who has schizophrenia. He will be discussing the importance of self-advocacy.

Sita Diehl, National Alliance on Mental Illness, will discuss the importance of concisely sharing your lived experience with legislators and will provide self-advocacy tips.

Attendees can also look forward to several testimonials including one from Tennessean reporter Brad Schmitt, a former representative for Lifeline, the State of Tennessee initiative working to reduce stigma and encourage prevention, treatment, and recovery in the field of substance abuse.

Where is Day on the Hill being held?

Day on the Hill will be at War Memorial Auditorium, in the heart of downtown Nashville, steps from the Capitol Building and Legislative Plaza. Past participants have taken the opportunity to sightsee and learn more about our state’s capital.

Who can attend Day on the Hill?

Anyone. Last year, about 400 people attended, including consumers and family members of consumers, professionals in the fields of mental health and substance abuse services, advocates, and legislators. Those interested in learning about and advocating for mental health and substance abuse services in Tennessee are encouraged to attend.

“If someone asked me, ‘should I attend Day on the Hill?’ the answer would definitely be yes, because it is a great way to make a difference and explain the real issues of mental health in Tennessee by putting real stories in front of legislators. It is often the only time that those living with mental illnesses get an opportunity to advocate and tell their own stories to legislators. It is an organized approach for advocates to ensure that state leaders hear a consistent message regarding the importance of preserving mental health dollars and services for mental health treatment.”

Ann M.
Advocate, volunteer, concerned citizen

To register for Behavioral Health Day on the Hill, visit [this link](#).





ART

for Awareness 10th Annual
March 18, 2015

For more information and to download a registration form, [Click here.](#)

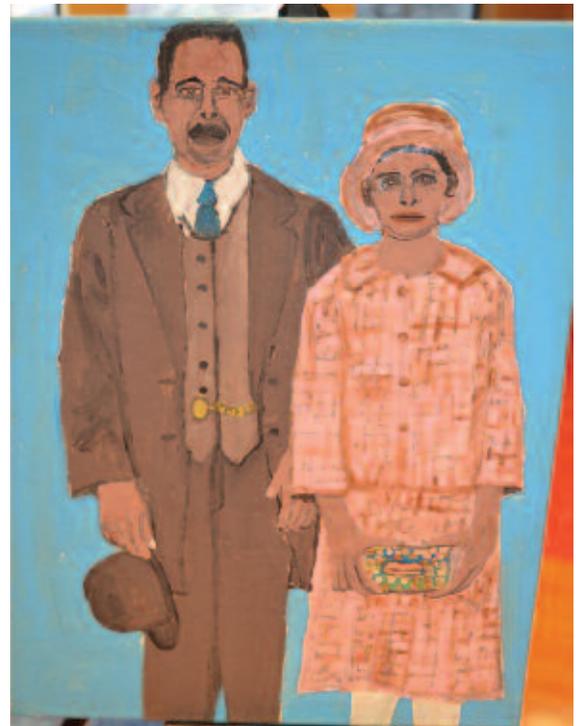
Lisa Ragan, Director of Consumer Affairs and Peer Recovery Services

Each spring, approximately 150 people throughout Tennessee bring their original artwork to Nashville for display at Legislative Plaza. The event, called Art for Awareness, gives people in recovery from mental illness or substance use disorder a chance to share their creations with state legislators and others while at the same time raising awareness.

Co-sponsored by Tennessee Department of Mental Health and

Substance Abuse Services and the Healing Arts Project, Inc. (HAPI), Art for Awareness includes a keynote speaker and a time for attendees to share what art means to them. Participating artists are awarded goody bags filled with art supplies. After the event, each person's artwork is displayed in the halls of Legislative Plaza with a card that includes the artist's name, hometown, and a quote describing the art or expressing what the art means to them. Some artists have even sold their artwork!

HAPI helps people find this creative outlet by providing art teachers, art classes, and art supplies to people in recovery from mental illness or substance use disorder. HAPI then exhibits artwork in community sites such as public libraries, churches, and galleries, helping to raise awareness, combat stigma, and promote understanding, acceptance, and success.



John Butts, Clarksville Reconnect Peer Support Center



Barbara Shirley



Libby Byler, Amerigroup Wellness and Recovery Lead, speaks at last year's event.

“Creating art helps people in recovery from mental illness or substance use disorder find a way to express themselves. Art encourages self-expression, self-discovery, and emotional growth and can be an outlet for expressing feelings of isolation, rejection, loss, and alienation that can accompany mental illness or substance use disorder.”

Lisa Ragan

10 Ways to Rock Your Health in 2015

By Katie Lee, Division of Mental Health Services

You work hard! At your workplace, at home, in the community, you are rocking it! But for many of us, we are not rocking our physical health. Studies show most of us are not eating healthy enough, and we are not getting as much physical activity as recommended. This year, let's make our physical health a priority because you are a priority!

- 1. Eat your veggies and fruit** Fill ½ of your plate with vegetables and fruit. That's right, half your plate! Aim for variety and lots of color! These foods can lower blood pressure, reduce risk of heart disease and stroke, prevent some types of cancer, lower risk of eye and digestive problems, and have a positive effect upon blood sugar which can help keep appetite in check.
- 2. Give me some grains** Make ¼ of your plate whole grains. Try whole wheat bread, brown rice, and whole wheat pasta. Get adventurous and try quinoa if you haven't – it's a superfood!
- 3. Add some protein** It is recommended that only ¼ of our plate is protein. Get your protein from a

variety of sources like fish, chicken, beans, and nuts. Mix them into salads or pair them with your veggies.

- 4. Get some "good" fat** Foods high in "good" fats include nuts, seeds, fish, and vegetable oils (such as olive, canola, sunflower, soy, and corn). Making small changes such as switching from butter to vegetable oil when cooking or eating salmon instead of steak will help us get more of the "good" fats into our bodies.
- 5. Drink up** Drink water, tea, and coffee. Skip the sugary beverages. Have one or two portions of milk or other dairy products per day.
- 6. Carbohydrates are not a bad word** We need carbohydrates. Let's switch our focus from counting carbs to being fully aware of the quality of carbohydrates we ingest. People with diabetes or who are at risk for diabetes do need to watch the number of carbohydrates they eat, but they still need to consume carbohydrates. So, let's focus on the carbs that come from healthier sources like veggies, fruits, whole grains, and beans.



Even vacations include physical activity for TDMHSAS Wellness Council Chair Katie Lee. Here she is hiking Mayan ruins on a family Christmas cruise.

7. **Make sure you are moving** Ten minutes at a time is fine. *It is recommended we get 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week.* If we aren't in the routine of being active, this amount can seem impossible. Start small, break it up into 10-minute increments, and work your way to 150 minutes/a week over a few months. If your endurance level is low, and you can only do 5-10 minutes at first, that's OK! It's 5-10 minutes more than you did yesterday!
8. **Don't forget muscle strengthening** In addition to doing aerobics or endurance activities, we need to make sure we are doing muscle-strengthening activities. It is recommended we do these 2 or more days a week that work all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, and arms). You don't need a gym membership for this...grab some water bottles or cans of food to use as weights!
9. **Flexibility isn't just for kids** Flexibility helps with balance and coordination. It is recommended we do 10 minutes of stretching each day.
10. **Have fun** Taking care of our physical health does not have to be a dreadful, boring, or painful experience. Start with what you like to do. Try one new healthier food a week. Involve others. Experiment. Explore. Reward yourself for successes, even if they seem small. Happy NEW Year!

Sources: Harvard School of Public Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and healthypeople.gov.



Katie Lee is a Program Manager in the Office of Consumer Wellness and Employment Programs and works primarily with My Health, My Choice, My Life - a health and wellness initiative for Tennesseans with mental health and substance use conditions. Last fall, she was appointed Chair of the TDMHSAS Wellness Council. Outside work, Katie loves spending time in the kitchen experimenting with new, healthy recipes, visiting new and unique restaurants, and going for walks/hikes with her husband at many of the parks in the Nashville area.

Fight to Be Fit



Talk about stress relief! At the Chili Cook-Off, with help from fellow Wellness Council members Sarah Sanders and Mike Machak, Monty Burks leads a fitness demonstration he calls "Fight 2 B Fit!" Andre Gibson, Deputy Commissioner Williams, and James Moore join the fun and work off some calories to boot.

PIO and ACE certified personal trainer Mike Machak communicates how to use arm bands in a workout. Here, the bands add resistance as he performs a shoulder press.

continued)))

For making a healthy life change and for sharing his story, Roy Chance is this issue's

HEALTHY HERO



“After smoking for 33 years and several failed attempts to quit, I succeeded in June of 2003. I have now been smoke-free for the last 11 years! My advice to those of you who smoke: never stop trying to quit. If you fail, keep trying. Because when you succeed, you will be so happy that you quit! I can't tell you how many times I failed but I refused to give up and finally made it!

You will, too!”

Roy Chance, Information Specialist 5

Thanks to the members of the 2014 TDMHSAS Wellness Council for promoting a healthier workplace!

Back row: Liz Ledbetter, Vivian Verran, Monty Burks, Deputy Commissioner Marie Williams, Debbie Shahla, Kevin Dillehay, Deb Cunningham, and Sarah Sanders.

Front row: Leslie Judson, former Chair Melissa McGee, and Tonya Black.

Not pictured: Alex King, Tony Jackson, Katie Lee, Laura Young, Mike Machak, Bobby Golden, Charles Taylor, Diane Lafferty, Gerald LaCourse, and Jamma Law.



COMING NEXT ISSUE:
Featuring Our Mental Health Institute's
Wellness Warriors!

One Step at a Time



Central Office staff joined in a “Climb to the Top of the Andrew Jackson Building” last fall followed by a Turkey Trot in November and a Holiday Hike just before Christmas. One part fun, one part fellowship, another part fitness. Worthy of a group selfie!

Participants for our first stair climbing included: Sejal West, Katie Lee, Neru Gobin, Trang Wadsworth, Sarah Sanders, Sue Hunt, Kevin Dillehay, Jackie Holcomb, Vik Moore, Monty Burks, Natalie Jeffers, Melvin Smith, Mike Machak, and Benita Hayes.

Check out these ‘Stair Climbing’ Facts:

- Stair climbing expends 8-9 times more energy than sitting and about 7 times more energy than taking the elevator. Challenge yourself to take the stairs at least once a day.
- You burn about one calorie for every 10 steps going up and another calorie for every 20 steps going down.
- Just 7 minutes of stair climbing a day, over a 10-year period, has been estimated to reduce the risk of a heart attack by 50 percent.



Who says living a healthy lifestyle can't be fun!?

Wellness Council members Mike Machak, Monty Burks, and event organizer Sarah Sanders pose for a top-of-the-stairs selfie.

Welcome Aboard

Jackie Yokley

Director of Sub-recipient Monitoring and Audit
Administrative Services

Jackie Yokley is our new Director of Sub-recipient Monitoring and Audit in the Division of Administrative Services. Jackie graduated from the University of Tennessee with honors, receiving her BS in Accounting. Jackie joins us from ALSAC/St. Jude Children's Research Hospital where she worked as an Internal Auditor, as Director of Internal Audit and Safety Officer, and as Corporate Compliance Officer. She is a Certified Compliance and Ethics Professional, a Certified Internal Auditor, a Certified Public Accountant, and a Chartered Global Management Accountant. She is Corporate Secretary of AEPX Professional Services Corp. and serves on the Board of Directors of Safeways, Inc.



Dr. Susannah Taylor Williams, M.D.

Clinical Director
Memphis Mental Health Institute

Susannah Taylor Williams, M.D., Board Certified in Psychiatry, was appointed Clinical Director at Memphis Mental Health Institute in October 2014. She is a graduate of the University of Alabama Medical School and completed her Psychiatric Residency at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Memphis. During her tenure at UTHSC, Dr. Williams was Chief Resident for Psychiatry. Her career has included working with the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Memphis, serving as Assistant Professor of Psychiatry for UTHSC, and as Chief of Psychiatry at Regional One Hospital in Memphis. Dr. Williams also works in the Student Counseling Center at Rhodes College.

Dr. Nancy Kirby, Ed.D.

Director of Forensic Services
Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute

Dr. Nancy Kirby was recently appointed Director of Forensic Services at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute where she previously served as a psychological examiner in the early 1990s. Most recently, Dr. Kirby was Clinical Director of Mental Health Services at Riverbend Maximum Security Institute for the Department of Correction and served as the Forensic Director in the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.



Dr. Solomon Meltzer, M.D.

Forensic Psychiatrist
Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute

Dr. Meltzer is the Forensic Psychiatrist at the Forensic Services Program at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute. He is a fellow of the American Psychiatric Association and the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law. Prior to joining MTMHI, Dr. Meltzer served as a forensic psychiatrist at Saint Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington D.C., along with working in private practice. As the father of three children, ages 10 to 4, he stays busy and is active in the martial art of Aikido and running.

continued)))

Alex R. King

Assistant Director
Office of Licensure

Alex R. King joined the Office of Licensure as an Assistant Director in August 2014. Prior he served as the Executive Assistant to Commissioner Varney and Deputy Commissioner Williams. Alex is a UT-Chattanooga alum with a bachelor's degree in Political Science and a concentration in Legal Studies. He is pursuing his Doctorate of Jurisprudence at the Nashville School of Law where he is currently in his third year. Away from the office, Alex enjoys spending time with his wife and taking in the many outdoor splendors of Tennessee.



Adam Belcher (left) and Alex King.

Adam Belcher

Middle TN Coordinator
Office of Licensure

Adam Belcher was born and raised in Rural Indiana and has spent his career working in social services, most

recently in Ohio as a trainer and job coach for a treatment center in Cincinnati. Adam has also worked for Child Protection with the State of Indiana, as an admissions and program coordinator for a residential treatment center/acute care hospital in Indianapolis,

and at a juvenile residential treatment center. In his free time, Adam is an avid reader and enjoys running and cooking. He is a graduate of Ball State University where he met his wife, Heidi. They currently share their home with two cats and a dog.

Service Awards 2014



Pictured with Commissioner Varney and Deputy Commissioner Williams and listed with years of service are front row, left to right: Cathy Benhamed, 35, and Janice Tomlinson, 10. Second row, left to right: Dave Farmer, 10; Ardana Miller-Foxx, 25; Avis Easley, 20; Carrie Kissner, 25; Gina Young, 10; SawSan Habib, 10; and Rodney Sanders, 25. Back row, left to right: Kurt Hippel, 5; Charliy Nash, 10; Freeman Ramsey III, 20; Andre Gibson, 25; and Roy Chance, 20. Not pictured: Dennis Temple, 25; Patricia Manners, 20; Ken Horvath, 15; Julie Ann Ratledge, 10; and Rod Bragg, 10.

Best Wishes to our 2014 Retirees!

Central Office

Dennis Berry
Desirae Pratt
Katherine Driskill
Diane Taylor
Nancy Greenwalt
Robert Martin, Jr.
Martha Sneed
Roy Upton
Linda Barnes
Dan Yates
Rodney Sanders

Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute

Sally Gatlin
James Jones
Debra Jordan
Paz Cabatu
Gordon Schrimsher
Olivia White
Delores Boyer
Cheryl Hagewood
Mary Towry
Carolyn Ewing
Shirley Watkins
Anthony Sweeney
Ramona Mason
Lamar Perry, Sr.
Shirley Edmondson
Michelle Orenstein
Janie Osborne
Annie Dillard

Western Mental Health Institute

Donna Thompson
Donna Ervin
Roy Grantham
Danny Douglas
Ronnie Forshea
Tracy Buggs
Susan Wech
Janette Moss
Hilary Linder
Amanda Woods
Martha Cliff
Jeannette Joy
Elma Woods
Ruth Lake
Jo Gibson
Silas Robertson, Jr.
Douglas Beard

Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute

Malinda Hardy
Joe Mcreynolds
Samuel Mcnabb
Jack Mason
John Parkinson
Jeffrey Jefferson
Patricia Frazier
Catherine Norrell
Eldridge Mathis
Mamie Redmond
Gloria Bulloch
Yvonne Laster
Brenda Jordan
Winifred Allen-Cody
Angelina Supan
Bobby Brooks

Memphis Mental Health Institute

Mary Brigance
Anthony Alexander
Ruthie Hancox
Marzee Short
Katherine Merriweather
Susan Murley
Lillian Mcghee
Sallie Powell
Barbara Evans
Eugene Williams
Cynthia Mcintosh
Etta Scurlock
Lois Macklin
Elizabeth Jones
Shirley Green
Jennifer Newell

“Know that you are helping. I feel honored to have served with all of you.”

Commissioner E. Douglas Varney,
addressing Central Office at the
2014 Service Awards

Wisdom from Rick Duncan

Crisis Services Outstanding Employee

Rick's encouragement for fellow crisis workers:

"Never take anything a patient in crisis says to you personally and try your best to leave work at work. Don't blame yourself if patients refuse to follow up with treatment for whatever reason. We do the best we can to give people assistance in ways that could improve their lives. We can't blame ourselves if they choose not to."

Rick's encouragement for friends or family members of a loved one in crisis:

"Always try and be supportive and non-judgmental. Many people don't believe in 'mental illness.' Unless you've walked in their shoes, it's impossible to know exactly what they're feeling, but you can show empathy and listen. Contact your local mental health center and consider the options that may be appropriate for someone that you care about."

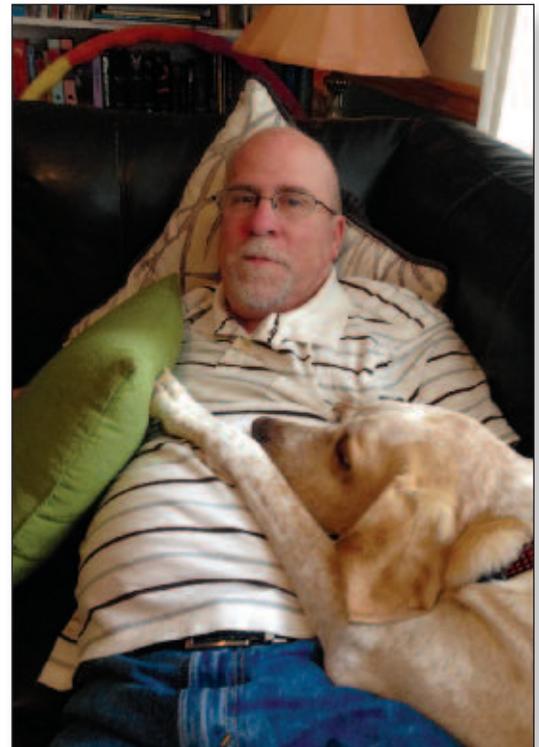
Why do you do this work?

"Though it can be frustrating and difficult at times, I gain a certain satisfaction when I see that clients have received the help they need to live and get enjoyment out of their lives that they may not have gotten otherwise. I'd like to think that I played a small role in their success."

What would you like to tell the folks you've served, if you knew they'd be reading?

"They've taught me more than they'll ever know."

Thank you, Rick, for the work that you do!



Rick relaxes with Henry.



Rick with his children (Caitlin, Kimberly, and Andrew) and granddaughter Olivia in New York City.

To nominate a colleague as a Crisis Services Outstanding Employee, download a nomination form [here](#). Completed forms submitted by April 6 will be considered for the next recognition.

I Raise My Voice

by Various Tennessee Artists

In our “Voices” for this winter issue, we are pleased to offer you a collection of illustrations, poems, and essays from Tennesseans in mental health and addiction recovery.

The poems were originally published by the Healing Arts Project, also known as HAPI, in the booklet “Faith, Hope, and Recovery in Letters 2014” through funding from the UnitedHealthcare Community Plan.

The beautiful and moving assortment of winter scenery comes from the 2014 collection and “Challenged Lives, Artistic Vision,” an art book featuring 27 artists and their work, also published by HAPI.

Our hope is these works offer you pause and a rich reflection on your own inner life, the peace and stillness of the season, and the promise of renewal coming in the spring.



After Sunrise

Barbara Shirley

NORMAL

Brandy Boyd

I wake each day and start brand new thinking to myself if people only really knew. I throw on some clothes and stumble around looking for that magic pill that will make me feel normal. I pop one, then two more. My mind begins to race and all I want to do is hide my face. The voices in my head scream they are wanting out. I block out the images they are spewing out. The clock strikes twelve and it is time once more to pop the pill that can make me feel normal if only for a few.

The shadows fade, the voices quieten, it’s been so long I had almost forgotten. These pills have my mind in such a haze, I gotta find my way out of this maze. I hear the voices; they are back again, sometimes I wished for me life had never begun.

I grab a bite to eat lowering my head in defeat. It’s time for bed. I pull down the covers ready to rest my head but my mind just races instead. I close my eyes and pray to God to give me strength to keep fighting this fight. Let me be normal, let me be sane. Oh Lord, please help me with all of this pain.

I say good night to all of my worries, thinking to myself, does anyone believe all of my stories.

I wake each day and start brand new, hoping today I can feel normal for a few.

what is hope

Shonda Parks

Hope is that sparkling of light on a dark night. Hope is what gives you the desire to try again after a hard fall. Hope is what helps you dust yourself off and get up and try again. Hope sneaks up on you when you least expect it, but it is always there when needed. You will never be alone as long as Hope is around and today I can try again because Hope found me. I can fight this hard fight because Hope prevails.



PHEASANTS

Clinton Toy

WINTER SCENE

Anita Wilson



The Strength Never Ends

Julie Kinder-Gilg

Whisper and glances, can you get the gist?
 Why we have diagnosis back on the list.
 Depression, bipolar; the list is long.
 A Recovery Tool is one long song,
 That breaks the barrier to dealing with it
 Mental illness is more than a casual myth.
 I'm afraid to go out, I'm afraid to stay in,
 There is no doubt, it could come from our kin.
 I try my best to be upbeat and proud,
 I've survived the past, let us shout it out loud.
 I have the Victory Center, to thank for my knowledge,
 What I have learned isn't far from my college.
 My family supporters, with the help from my friends,
 Make me never give up; the strength never ends.

BUTTERFLY ME

Marjorie Diefenbach

I am loved, I am free
I am working on where I want to be.
I made it through, yet scars remain
They are reminders of all the pain
Faith, Hope, Joy, Peace and Love
Raining on me from the heavens above
How did it happen? How can it be?
All of these feelings are confusing me

I like the freedom, I like the song
Yet sometimes it still feels so wrong
I can't understand it, I wonder why
I continue to transform like a butterfly

I am loved, I am free
I am working on who I want to be



Kathy Tupper, Annie C

The Healing Arts Project, Inc., also known as HAPI, is a non-profit organization that provides an avenue for persons in mental health and addiction recovery to express their creativity through a wide range of artistic endeavors. For more information about HAPI, visit www.healingartsprojectinc.org.

MISTEAL FOREST Donald McFarland

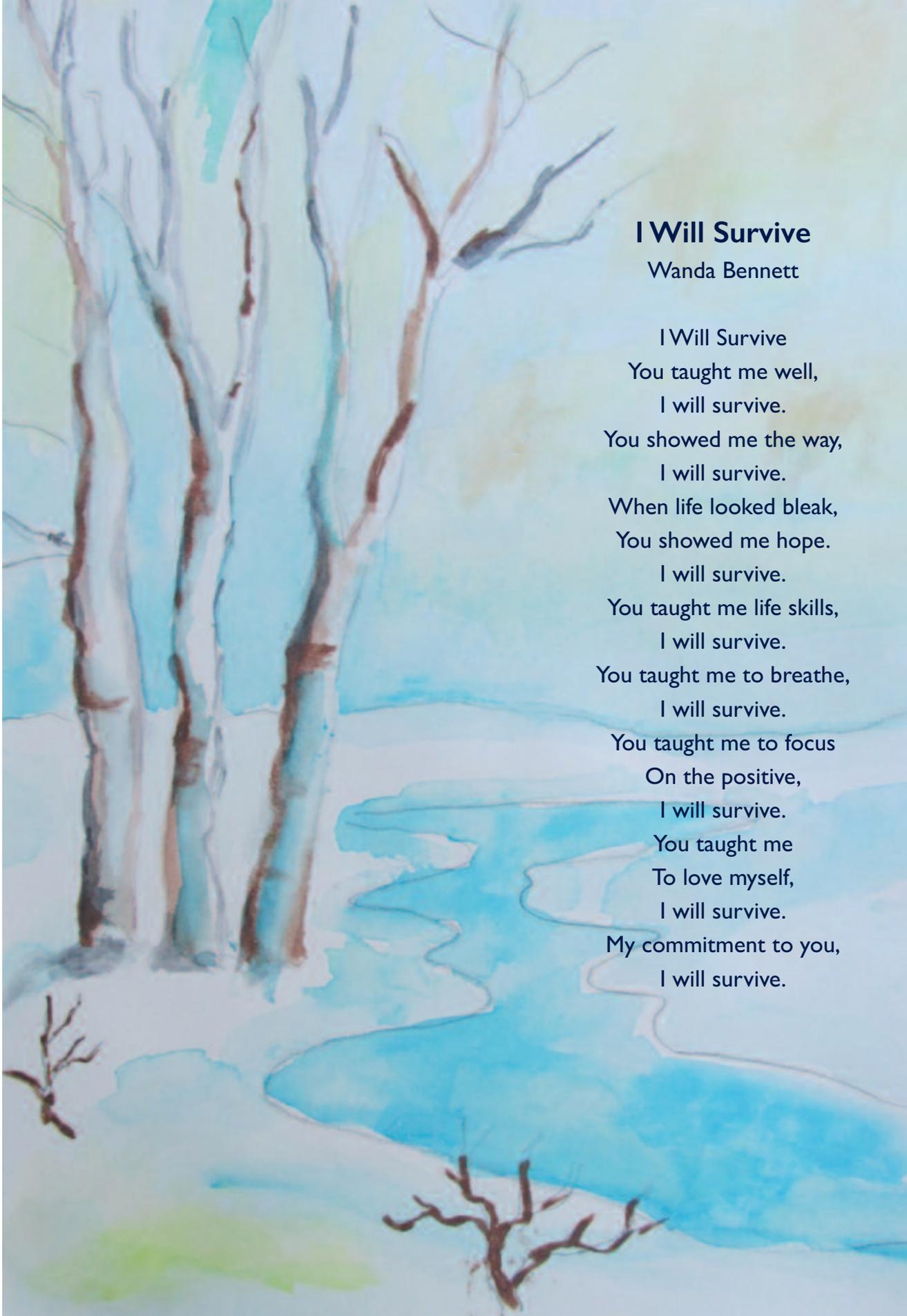


My Recovery

I have been out of the hospital for fourteen years. I have had struggles and stairs I had to climb. I love to read and I love to write. My journey is difficult and I had to fight! Progress is in the future; recovery is definite. Wellness is on the way. Good times are here to stay. No more mood swings or grandiose ideas! Just preparing for the future and reaching for the sky! Leaving bipolar ideas way behind and living in reality. Completing goals that you would never believe!

Ray Dean Cox

Do you have writing or artwork you'd like to share with Update readers?
Please email Leslie.Judson@tn.gov or call 615-770-0466.



I Will Survive

Wanda Bennett

I Will Survive
You taught me well,
I will survive.
You showed me the way,
I will survive.
When life looked bleak,
You showed me hope.
I will survive.
You taught me life skills,
I will survive.
You taught me to breathe,
I will survive.
You taught me to focus
On the positive,
I will survive.
You taught me
To love myself,
I will survive.
My commitment to you,
I will survive.

Frosty Morning by Anonymous